Introduction

- Every year, the number of international students studying in the United States dramatically increases
- International students are often faced with acculturative stress and adjustment problems
- Stressors include language or communication barrier, financial strains, interpersonal conflict, etc

Wang (2009)
Language and Communication Barrier

- For many countries, English is not the first language
- Difficulties faced in the following area:
  - Challenges in comprehending spoken English
    - Interpersonal
    - Academic
    - Professional
  - Challenges in expressing oneself
    - Interpersonal
    - Academic
    - Professional
  - Unable to meet expectations for graduate-level work
Financial Strain

- International students pay twice as much for tuition
- International students pay out-of-pocket
  - Currency exchange rates vary
- Difficult to obtain financial aid
  - Most financial aid are limited to U.S. citizens and permanent residents
- Limited options to obtain employment in the U.S.
  - Visa restrictions
- Have to demonstrate financial ability to the university
Interpersonal Conflict

- Different cultural values may lead to misunderstandings
  - Differences in Eastern and Western culture
- Difficulties in conflict resolution due to language barriers
  - Inability to communicate effectively to set boundaries or reach compromise
Other Factors Associated with Adjustment Problems

- Age
- Gender
- Marital Status
- English Language Proficiency
- Academic Level
- Major Fields of Study
- Length of Stay
- Region of the World/Country of Origin
- Size of School
- Orientation
- Living Arrangements
- Employment at Home
- Previous International Experience
- National Status Accorded
- Parents Educational Background

(Wang, 2009)
Resilience moderately associated with background variables.
Resilience better correlated with adjustment problems than background variables.
Highly negatively correlated with adjustment problems.
Resilience has the effect on adjustment problems.
  Students who are highly resilient have lower adjustment problems.
Why is this important?
  Design ways to improve resilience among international students and help them adjust better the new environment.

(Wang, 2009)
How Should Cultural Competence Be Viewed?

“Cultural competence, therefore, is an acknowledgement and incorporation of, on the part of clinicians and healthcare systems, the importance of culture, the assessment of cross-cultural relations, vigilance towards the dynamics that result from cultural differences, the expansion of cultural knowledge, and the adaptation of services to meet culturally unique needs”

- Empathy
- Curiosity
- Respect

(Kodjo, C., 2009)
Why is Cultural Competence Important

- More racially and ethnically diverse people in the USA
- Asia is largest source of immigrants
  - No longer Latin America
- More Millennials than baby boomers
- Changes in family structures
- Women’s “role” changing
- Number of those not identifying with a specific religion has increased
- Aging Population

(“10 demographic trends that are shaping the U.S. and the world”)
Integrating cultural competence into the curriculum of rehabilitation studies in graduate school helps develop:

- Self-awareness
- Confidence
- Advocacy characteristics

(Matteliano & Stone, 2006)

Combating Natural Human Response:

- Illusory correlation
- Out-group bias

(Steed, 2014)
Why Now?

Table 1. Stages of Intercultural Maturity Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cognitive</th>
<th>Intrapersonal</th>
<th>Interpersonal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial</td>
<td>culturally naïve, non-reflective acceptance of</td>
<td>lack of awareness of personal values and identity,</td>
<td>ego-centric, moralistic view of others, differences from own culture viewed as wrong, interaction limited to personal cultural group</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>knowledge from authorities, ethnocentric,</td>
<td>insecurity, differences in others viewed as a threat to self</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>resistance to new ways of thinking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>increased reliance on personal experiences</td>
<td>beginning of internal locus of values and identity, exploration of personal cultural identity</td>
<td>less-judgmental, more inclusive view of differences, increased interaction with others outside of personal cultural group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and multiple sources of knowledge, beginning of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ethno-relative perspective</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mature</td>
<td>ability to understand and interact with multiple</td>
<td>comfort with personal identity, open to discussing values and beliefs without feeling threatened</td>
<td>global perspective, appreciation of differences, comfortable interacting with diverse individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>world views</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from King and Baxter-Magoida, 2005, p. 576

From Steed, 2014 p. 81
It’s More than Knowing Cultural Correlates

- Self-awareness
- Acceptance of cultural differences
- Acknowledge power dynamics
- Cultural Knowledge

(Kodjo, C., 2009)
● Add competence information into questionnaires
  ○ Have them completed before 1st visit
    ■ Pre-stamped envelopes, electronic forms
● Attend culturally diverse workshops/seminars
  ○ World Federation of Occupational Therapists
  ○ National Black Occupational Therapy Caucus (NBOTC)
  ○ National Black Association of Speech-Language and Hearing (NBASLH)
  ○ National Latino/a Psychological Association
  ○ International Professional Organizations
● Remember, identity is intersectional
● Contact local agencies
● Provide supplementary information
● Ask open-ended questions:
  ○ What are their priorities, concerns, and available resources
How to Implement Cultural Competence in your Group or Class

Integration of cultural competence into the curriculum of rehabilitation studies in graduate school helped develop:

- Self-awareness
- Confidence
- Advocacy characteristics

Goal: Foreign-born individuals receive rehab services that reflect their needs

Matteliano & Stone, 2006
Breaking Down the Statistics

- 1,766 international students enrolled at the university from more than 90 countries
- 1,372 international scholars from more than 75 countries
- In the undergraduate class entering Fall 2017, over 500 students were international students

(Class Profile)
Mental Health Services Awareness

- Counseling and Psychological Services
  - Walk-in, medication management, counseling
- CECMH - Center for Excellence in Community Mental Health
- NAMI - National Alliance on Mental Illness
  - Chapel Hill
- Sister Talk
  - UNC Wellness
- THRIVE
  - Campus Wellness

73% of people who answered have not used these services
Primary Stressors

1. Academics
2. Financial Strain
3. Interpersonal relationships
4. Self-image/identity
5. Communication/Language Barrier

In the past 3 months students have felt:

1. Anxiety- 75%
2. Depression-25%
Communication Difficulties

1. Peers
2. Faculty
3. Health Care Provider
4. Clients/patients
5. Other
   a. Significant others/Family
9% of people self-identified as speaking another dialect.

- Southern American English - 1
- African American Vernacular English - 4
- American Sign Language - 1
References


